

Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Branch Activity Report  
to the State Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Advisory Council (SEMTAC)

July 9, 2020

This report is submitted as a record of key activities by the Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Branch for the period ending June 30, 2020.

### Organizational Effectiveness

In the second quarter of 2020, Vanessa Brazee joined the branch working as a Licensing Specialist in the Operations Section. Vanessa brings nearly twenty years of EMS and related experience to the position, with stints as an Army combat medic, EMT and Critical Care EMT with American Medical Response and AirLife, and most recently as an emergency preparedness and response coordinator with the Pueblo Department of Public Health and Environment. Her responsibilities include air ambulance licensing, EMS provider certification/licensing, and Community Integrated Healthcare Services licensing.

### Operations Section

Mike Bateman, Section Manager, [michael.bateman@state.co.us](mailto:michael.bateman@state.co.us)

### EMS Provider Certification

At the end of the second quarter of 2020, there were 18,586 certified EMS providers in the state: 13,382 EMTs; 349 AEMTs; 419 Intermediates; and 4,436 Paramedics (of which 412 paramedics have critical care endorsement, 23 have the community paramedic endorsement, and 7 have both P-CC and P-CP endorsements).

### EMR Registration

There are 438 voluntarily registered Emergency Medical Responders.

### Education

There are 218 recognized education programs in OATH representing education centers (initial training) and education groups (continuing education). Education centers are also recognized as education groups and are counted in both categories.

### Emergency Medical Practice Advisory Council (EMPAC)

There are currently 456 active scope of practice waivers, of which 4 are for BLS provider levels, 35 are for both BLS and ALS provider levels, and 417 are for ALS provider levels. The next EMPAC meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 10, 2020, starting at 8 a.m. at the CDPHE offices in Denver. The next Regional Medical Direction committee meeting will run concurrently with the EMPAC meeting Monday, August 10, from 8 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.

## Air Ambulance

There are 31 licensed air ambulance service agencies in Colorado, of which 20 are full two-year licenses and 11 are recognition licenses.

## Funding Section

Eric Schmidt, Section Manager, [eric.schmidt@state.co.us](mailto:eric.schmidt@state.co.us)

## Technical Assistance

At the request of local governments and in conjunction with the regional emergency medical and trauma services advisory councils (RETACs), staff members coordinate technical assistance services to local entities. A consultative visit for Bent County is currently in progress. The on-site interviews were completed February 6 but the final report was delayed by the global public health crisis. It is expected to be completed later this summer. The department has performed 21 local EMTS system assessments since the program began. Copies of the final reports with recommendations are available from the department.

## CREATE

The Colorado Rural Health Center continues to administer the Colorado Resource for EMS and Trauma Education (CREATE) grant program. There was one financial waiver request submitted for review during the quarter that was not approved. The Expert Review Committee evaluated nine applications requesting \$55,769 in funding. Six courses were approved with \$33,803 awarded.

## Provider Grants and System Improvement Funding Requests

The legislature authorized approximately \$8.4 million for the funding program in fiscal year 2020. Five hundred thousand dollars was allocated for the CREATE educational grant program, \$362,990 for regional medical direction projects, \$284,915 for supplemental RETAC funding, \$65,000 to provide support for the new trauma registry software, \$316,302 in temporary funding for the peer assistance program and \$150,000 was set-aside for emergency grants. An additional \$1.2 million was held back due to reduced revenue projections based on a decreased number of vehicle registrations subject to the fee. For the fiscal year 2020 funding cycle, the department awarded \$5,436,436 in provider grant awards and \$106,905 for system improvement funding. Sixty-three projects were completed and closed by June 30, and there have been \$118,752 in reversions. There are 58 projects that have been completed but grantees have yet to request \$2,750,047 in reimbursements. Ninety-six funding applications were submitted for the fiscal year 2021 funding program; ten regional medical direction projects, three system improvement projects and 83 provider grants. The fiscal year 2021 appropriation was unchanged but the amount available for awards was significantly less due to the shortfall in revenue. The decline in revenue was attributed to the delay in vehicle registrations caused by the closure of county clerk's offices and emission testing facilities as well as the reduced number of vehicles subject to the fee implemented last year. It is not clear if revenues will recover with the loosening of restrictions affecting the ability to register vehicles. The department awarded \$3,761,496 for 77 fiscal year 2021 projects. The funding section is working to create contracts and purchase orders.

## Emergency Grants

The emergency grant request received near the end of the last quarter was completed on schedule in May. The rural Level IV trauma center received \$35,856 to proportionately assist with the replacement of an x-ray system that failed unexpectedly and could not be repaired.



## Trauma Section

Martin Duffy, Section Manager, [martin.duffy@state.co.us](mailto:martin.duffy@state.co.us)

### Trauma Reviews/Designations

During the second quarter of 2020, the Trauma Section completed no reviews due to the global Coronavirus pandemic. The Department, through a waiver process, granted all trauma facilities scheduled for a triennial designation review between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2023 a one year extension to their designation expiration date. All remaining facilities in the current review cycle and those seeking a new facility designation will be reviewed as soon as possible. There are currently 84 designated trauma centers.

### Trauma Consultations and Outreach Visits

Staff members provided technical assistance and/or monitoring to several facilities during the second quarter. Trauma staff also provided technical assistance to all facilities setting up their gatekeeper accounts and completing their profile in OATH.

### Designation Review Committee (DRC)

The DRC meets quarterly on SEMTAC committee day. The April DRC was cancelled due to the COVID19 response.

### Statewide Trauma Advisory Committee (STAC)

The STAC meeting for April was cancelled due to the COVID19 response.

### Stroke Advisory Board

House Bill 20-1397 passed the state legislature and, once signed by the governor, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment will no longer provide administrative support for this board. Through the transition, and as the board finds avenues for administrative support, the board will continue its work to make recommendations on how to improve the stroke system of care in Colorado. As the department transitions out of providing this service, it's a good time to thank and recognize Eileen Brown for her dedicated time and outstanding work to support the board over the last six years. More information can be found on the [Stroke Advisory Board webpage](#).

### Other Trauma Section Activities

- Continued to provide technical assistance to stakeholders requesting registry assistance.
- The Trauma Section was able to publish a contact list as there was 100% compliance in completing the trauma facility profile.
- Invoices were sent to all 84 facilities seeking trauma designation. The annual billing cycle began July 1, 2020.

## Data Section

Amber Viitanen, EMTS Data Section Manager, [amber.viitanen@state.co.us](mailto:amber.viitanen@state.co.us)

The data team continues to make progress enhancing data quality from licensed air and ground ambulance agencies across the state using Version 3.4.0. Over 200 agencies have



transitioned to NEMSIS Version 3 data reporting. As a result, the department has shifted focus to quality improvement and enhanced data reporting. Most notably, the quarterly compliance reports that are sent to regional coordinators were expanded to include 13 total reports ranging from basic summary information to specific benchmark measures allowing coordinators to compare performance. In addition, the team has built several benchmark dashboards that will allow ambulance agencies to retrieve their own patient care data and compare their performance to their region and the state overall.

Utilizing the department's new partnership with Biospatial, Inc, a tool that uses emergency medical services and health-related data sources to provide timely, national-scale syndromic detection, monitor real-time trends, and alert to syndromic anomalies critical to the nation's health and safety, the data team has built several sub-organizations to share vital data across the department. Additionally, the team has begun sharing state level reports examining changes in time sensitive syndromes treated by EMS as well as other topics of interest. Such topics include disease surveillance, motor vehicle crashes, overdoses, and general performance measures.

With over a million records in the Colorado Trauma Registry, the branch continues to refine its trauma data. In early 2019, the implementation of a new software, ImageTrend's Patient Registry was completed. It now serves as the data repository and direct entry system for the Colorado Trauma Registry. Over 50,000 records have been entered or imported into the system from all 85 facilities. The team has begun building new summary reports for facilities to access and will continue to refine this system to meet the needs of the trauma facilities and the department.

The EMTS branch also rolled out its new profile system in November 2019 and now has more than 200 organizations in the system. The ImageTrend Profiles replaced the previous homegrown CEMSIS Profiles system. The old system was no longer functional, therefore, EMTS organizations are now required to maintain their profile information in ImageTrend. This is the organizational profile that licensed ambulance services are required to maintain as a condition of their license from counties. The ImageTrend Profiles system continues to maintain the same data that was collected in the old system and is the entry point for grant submission. Additionally, ImageTrend Profiles provides additional capabilities including: linking to ePCR data, medical directors, scope of practice waivers, and air ambulance licensing, increasing data quality and improved contact lists with verified accounts, and providing entry point to new EMS data dashboards.

Data Section staff members continue to:

- Provide NEMSIS Version 3 training and CQI, including new processes, rules, and updates
- Troubleshoot problems that arise with a completed schematron, ImageTrend ePCR, data entry, reporting, or other data issues
- Provide ongoing technical assistance to transport agencies, trauma centers and their software vendors
- Assist hospitals with accessing Hospital Hub Dashboard and Elite Field to enhance communication between medical staff and EMS providers
- Develop ad-hoc EMS and trauma reports to accommodate data requests and other data driven requirements including benchmarking and quality improvement



- Analyze data and prepare reports and/or presentations for stakeholders
- Assist EMS agencies using third party vendor software to establish an administrative web access and process for submitting XML data to the ImageTrend database
- Assist in implementation of the new Trauma Registry system in Colorado, including building data entry forms, validation rules, data dictionaries, scheduled reports, etc.
- Develop and implement new ways to use EMS and Trauma data such as benchmark reports, dashboards, and presentations to enhance care for patients across Colorado

### EMTS Investigations

Shelley Sanderman, HFEMSD Enforcement, [shelley.sanderman@state.co.us](mailto:shelley.sanderman@state.co.us)

During the second quarter of 2020, there were six disciplinary actions against EMS providers' certifications that resulted in a final disposition. There are four ongoing cases filed with the Office of Administrative Courts, in which the Department is represented by the Attorney General's Office. Finally, eighteen complaints were investigated, thirteen of which have been closed by the investigations unit, leaving five complaints still under investigation. For the purposes of this report, complaints regarding the same provider/agency/subject matter are considered one complaint.

### Regional Emergency Medical and Trauma Advisory Councils (RETACs)

Matthew Paswaters, Coordinator, [mattew.paswaters@state.co.us](mailto:mattew.paswaters@state.co.us)

Third quarter activity reports and financial statements for FY20 were submitted by all 11 RETACs. The most recent quarterly RETAC forum was held June 17-18 in Steamboat Springs. The next RETAC forum is Sept. 2-3 in Pueblo. SEMTAC members are encouraged to attend RETAC forum meetings.

### Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC)

Contact: Stacey Quesada, Program Manager [stacey.quesada@cuanschultz.edu](mailto:stacey.quesada@cuanschultz.edu)

EMS for Children is a federal partnership grant funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. To address the grant deliverables most effectively, the program is housed at University of Colorado School of Medicine, which employs the EMSC Program Manager and manages most EMS for Children activities. A close relationship is maintained with the EMTS Branch. The Pediatric Emergency Care Committee (PECC) serves as the advisory committee for the program. The program continues to implement a [strategic plan](#). Activities this quarter included:

- Conducted the quarterly Pediatric Emergency Care Committee meeting
- Facilitated three Colorado Pediatric Preparedness for the ER (COPPER) steering committee meetings
- Developed and administered COPPER steering committee survey on ED Pediatric Emergency Care Coordinators' responsibilities
- Helped the Children's Hospital Colorado (CHCO) EMS Outreach and Education team record, host, and edit virtual lectures
- Created EMSC YouTube channel to house online pediatric education content
- Developed online evaluations/certificates for CHCO's online students



- Connected with the department's Office of Suicide Prevention to begin discussions around collaborating and sharing resources
- Made several enhancements to the EMSC website
- Attended the June RETAC forum (via phone)

Additional information is available at the [EMS for Children](#) website.

## Communications

Curtis Nations, Communications Program Coordinator, [curtis.nations@state.co.us](mailto:curtis.nations@state.co.us)

The EMTS Branch continues to support the implementation of the Statewide Digital Trunked Radio (DTR) system. Since the statewide communications plan has been finalized, the communications program staff members continue to educate and inform EMS system users in "best practices" on how to integrate DTR into their daily operations. Staff members have also continued their work to identify the various mechanisms being used to maintain hospital-to-field communication throughout the state and enhance inter-agency operability and interoperability capabilities.

Located throughout the state, the infrastructure currently consists of 247 on-the-air APCO P25 digital trunked radio sites operating in conjunction with five zone controllers and utilizes frequencies in the 700MHz/ 800MHz bands. Out of the 247 radio sites, 27 sites are accessible for EMS aircraft communications. There are several funded Digital Trunked Radio (DTR) remote sites throughout the state that are in the planning, engineering or installation phase.

The DTR system uses mostly microwave radio, and some fiber optic cable, to link all of the sites together. A complete replacement/upgrade of the microwave is now underway, and equipment at about eight of the sites has been replaced. This project could take up to five years to complete. Once complete, the system will have redundant paths to improve communications reliability across the state.

AT&T continues to work with FirstNet to deploy additional public safety broadband infrastructure in Colorado. AT&T stood up its dedicated public safety core and advised the completed Initial Operating Capability-1 (IOC-1). They have deployed dozens of the planned Band 14 sites through the state, with more to come over the next few years. They are working to upgrade many sites from 3G to 4G and establish roaming agreements with smaller rural Colorado carriers to expand the network as well.

